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*The Divine Presence the best Protection in
Time of Danger.*

DEMONSTRATED;

IN

A DISCOURSE,

AT THE OLD-MEETING, STOURBRIDGE;

Delivered February 25, 1795.

BEING THE DAY APPOINTED BY GOVERNMENT, FOR A
GENERAL FAST.

.....
BY THE REV. H. HUNT.
.....

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE HEARERS.

" O BRITAIN ! often rescu'd, often crown'd
" Beyond thy merit, or most sanguine hopes,
" With all that's great in *war* or sweet in *peace* !
" Know from what source thy signal blessings flow,
" Tho' blest'd with spirits ardent in the field,
" Tho' cover'd various *oceans* with thy fleets,
" Tho' fenc'd with rocks, and moated by the main,
" Thy trust repose in a far stronger guard:
" In HIM, who thee, tho' *naked*, could defend:
" Tho' *weak*, could *strengthen* ; ruin'd, could *restore* . "

YOUNG

Stourbridge,

PRINTED BY J. ROLLASON,

FOR THE AUTHOR,

AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

1795.

PRICE SIX-PENCE.



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AN ADDRESS,

TO THE DISSENTERS IN STOURBRIDGE, AND
ITS VICINITY; ESPECIALLY THEIR
CHILDREN.

FELLOW CHRISTIANS,

THE ensuing discourse, not being designed for the press, it was composed in my usual plain style, intended for usefulness only. But you having signified your approbation, and wish of a private perusal, I have complied, though with no small degree of diffident reluctance. The *Sentiments* are the same as delivered, but have taken liberty so to alter the *Mode*, as to fit it better for public view.

Your principles as *Dissenters*, being drawn from the scriptures of truth, those lively
oracles

oracles of God, should not be opposed by men of whatever vicious turn of mind. Nor does it become you or me to be ashamed of them.

Think it not strange however, that you and they are held in contempt, in an evil day: it was so from the beginning as well as now.

Know then, that our forefathers came forward in the world on principles of Religion and Loyalty.

In *Religion*—Stemming the overflowing tide of the ignorance, error, and slavery of their days; and settling an harmonized “form of sound words,” once delivered to the saints. To *that stand*, the present National, Parliamentary established Religion owes its confirmation, in the reigns of K. Ed: VI. and Q. Elizabeth.

In

In *Loyalty*—It was with similar sentiments the primitive Christians in Britain opposed the vain claim of the supremacy of Rome, over both their Kings and themselves. Indeed loyalty and true religion have always gone together, and every age of the christian church evinces it. I need only refer you to the transactions of the British Churches from the first to the sixth Century.

Their well informed descendants too, ever assisted our former Kings and Governors, in reforming the modes of religion and manners, until still brighter periods should appear.

It was your *puritan* dissenting fore-fathers, who were the best instruments in restoring King Charles II. to the vacant throne of his ancestors: as, “the presbyterian people and church of Scotland;” and the Non-conforming Ministers from England, who waited on him for that purpose at BREDA, shew. And who so active and hearty as they

they, in inviting and welcoming the famed William the third? or in aiding and defending the families of BRUNSWICK and HANOVER, against their, and Britain's enemies?

You know too, you are taught no contrary doctrines by your *present ministers*, private or public: and if you were; I have confidence in you, that you would not receive them.

The grand *topic* in which all dissenters unite, is, "That, the Lord Christ alone, "is, and should be the only head of his "Church, her *sole* law-giver: and, that his "majestic and positive appointments in "scripture, are to be received and submitted "to by his subjects, as the altogether sufficient law of his Kingdom, without any "imaginary improvements of men; or, imposed forms as conditions of Church fellowship, by any authority whatsoever." This I say is what all dissenters unite in.

Dissenters,

Dissenters, like *others*, may, and do differ from one another in *other points*:—Yet thus “ holding the head, ” they have *so far* fellowship and charity one with another. Nor can we see, that any attempts made by men, have as yet, brought even the members of their own communities, to unity of mind and doctrine in *all points*. It seems a device and labour quite beyond human power to accomplish. And as we know Christ’s kingdom is not of this world, or its maxims ; and as he rules all human affairs, yet by his permissive providence denying us a share in the emoluments of church and state, and being deprived thereof by the laws of our country: we leave *political matters* to constituted governors, and console ourselves in the free use of religion, in the blessings thereof, and hope of future glory ; whatever right we may have, natural or civil, to more.

On this ground, Sirs, your pass is tenable, is defensible: “ Stand fast therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you
“ free. ”

“ free. ” — “ Be stedfast, unmoveable, always
 “ abounding in the work of the Lord, know-
 “ ing that your labour is not, shall not be
 “ in vain, in the Lord. ” And if these
 lines, or the following pages, will con-
 tribute but one mite thereto, it will gratify
 my long and warm wish. For this purpose
 I humbly offer them at the feet of my
 great Master, “ for the good of you and
 “ your children after you. ”

And ye, dear Children, and tender care of
 your loving parents, know you thus the
 God of your fathers: enquire, learn, and
 get to know to the best purpose, for your
 own good, what is the will of the Lord,
 and what is intended by our *plain gospel*
service. In and by it do you adorn the
 doctrine of God our Saviour; and teach
 your children after you. Consider what is
 said, and the Lord give you a good under-
 standing therein, and in all things. *Amen.*

H. H.

STOURBRIDGE,
 March 2, 1795.

A

A

DISCOURSE, &c.

MEN AND BRETHREN,

BEING called upon by Government to humble ourselves for our Sins, as a Nation, before the presence of Jehovah, in order to avert his justly incensed wrath, and you having requested me to take a part in the awful solemnities of this day, I *heartily* join you in the necessary work.—May our efforts be acceptable to the God of worship, and useful to all concerned.

But previous to our entering upon this duty, it may be necessary just to observe, that however undeserved the Calumnies with which we are loaded, however free from the unjust imputation of guilt, error, disaffection, or disloyalty; it becomes us even in our best religious exercises; both as professing Christians and *Dissenters*, to act with circumspection and prudence; well knowing that “perilous times are come.” For my part I shall deviate

viate from my usual mode of addressing you, and
read what I have to say on this occasion, from

NUMBERS x. xxxvi.

“RETURN, O LORD, UNTO THE MANY THOU-
 “SANDS OF ISRAEL.”

These words were originally spoken by Moses, the servant of the Lord, when in his watchful attendance on the movements of the Ark of God, as it led Israel through the wilderness to the promised Canaan.

If it set forward and danger appeared, Moses, knowing that this was the symbol of the Divine Presence, with the confidence of a faithful worshiper of Jehovah, from whom alone he sought for victory, presents his petition: “Rise up, Lord, “and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them “that hate thee flee before thee.”---And when it Rested, with the most pleasing rapture, beholding the token of the favour of his and Israel’s God again resting with them, he anew addresses the Almighty, in full persuasion of protection from his Omnipotent presence, “Return, O Lord, to “the many thousands of Israel.”

Each of these prayers is an affectionate and earnest application to the God of Israel for those
 blessings

blessings which are the portion of his chosen, and shews the peculiar confidence of the people in his care and guardianship. Their temporal concerns, whether prosperous or adverse, they well knew were safe in his all-protecting hand; while with a still higher confidence, they ardently desired to be favoured with the Divine Shekinah in their religious and spiritual interests: and as the ark was the emblem of his favour to them; so it was typical of the coming *Messiah*, who was to be to his people a sure pledge of the favour and blessing of God*.

But, Brethren, Israel no more appears on this sublunary ball: thousands of years they have been consigned to the silent Tomb: Moses is long since gone to receive his Crown: his followers the Jewish Saints, no more experience the miseries of life, but are partaking of the joys of their Lord. The *New Testament* saints do also sweetly sleep in Jesus. In like manner our fathers and reformers have paid the debt to nature: their struggles and their miseries, their conflicts and their fears are all done away: God has wiped every tear from their eyes; while we, as they were once, are left to tread this dreary desert amidst surrounding enemies: doomed to roam in the labyrinths of this world, we are

* Exodus, xxi. 20, 21 22.

obliged

obliged to maintain a daily combat with vice and error; misrepresentations of our principles, and false charges of sentiments we never adopted. Like the *primitive Christians*, we are considered as the cause of the Calamities which now afflict the Empire, yet like them, equally innocent.—We suffer every species of indignity and reproach.—Yet amidst these we are not left without hope.—We have the ark of religion with us, and in it, a confidence of triumph in our *unseen Saviour*.—Conscious of our own innocence, we wait, with a holy faith, until he pleases to justify his people; and you may rest assured, my fellow Christians, that this is sufficient to guide the “few names in “Sardis” to their desired rest.

In our present situation, I look upon these words in the text, as a suitable directory for this day's service: For “whatsoever things were written “aforetime were written for our learning, that we “through patience and comfort of the scriptures “might have hope*.” From the words first read, I deduce this doctrine, (viz.) “*That the Divine Presence is the best security for his people, in time of “Danger.*” And the order I propose for illustrating it is, First; to compare Israel and Britain:—Second; take notice of some of our present na-

* Rom. xv. 4.

tional circumstances.—Third; from these, state the duties of the day.

First then, Britain, like Israel, is a *redeemed* people, and precious in the sight of the Lord. Israel was redeemed from idolatry and Egyptian slavery; Britain, from Paganism, Popery, and Tyranny.—Israel was restored to Freedom, Civil and Religious:—So was Britain to the worship of the true God, by *one* only mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, as well to as the enjoyment of her natural and civil rights. Israel was peculiarly favoured with the Divine ordinances and teachings*. Britain enjoys them in the greatest purity. Israel was blessed with a continued succession of priests, to whom were committed the lively oracles of God †. Britain from the earliest days has been favoured with a preached gospel, and with faithful and sound ministers, whose names shall last while time endures. What a glorious cloud of witnesses have we from the days of WICKLIFF, the morning star of the Reformation, to the present day! Israel was peculiarly tenacious of the law of her God; Britain may justly challenge every other Nation for zeal in the cause and ways of God. Israel was noted for her *martial* spirit in the preservation of

*Rom. iii. 2.

† Rom. ix. 4.

her liberties : And what nation more jealous of them than Britain ? Who can recount the number of Britons who have bled for their country ? Shall we view our own stained fields, or shall we trace foreign shores, these will equally proclaim the valour and successes of Britain, in defence of her natural rights ; and even amidst her *late* disasters her courage has never been sullied.—But Britain, like Israel, has sinned exceedingly against the Lord her God.

How therefore “ are the mighty fallen, and
“ the fine gold become dross ! The beauty of Israel
“ is fallen, the mighty are slain, and the weapons of
“ war are perished. Though unfit to be told in
“ Gath, or published in the streets of Britain ; yet
“ the Mountains, Plains, and Coasts of the Continent
“ witness the fall of our heroes, as if they had not
“ been anointed with oil*.”

What a change from the many glorious victories of Britain ! Shall I mention the plains of Minden ; the impenetrable rocks of Gibraltar : point you to the burning sands of the East : or lead you to the Duke of Cumberland’s victory, in the fields of Culloden ? All these prove that God *formerly* went forth with our armies ; but our late

* II Sam. i. 1.

defeats strongly indicate, that we have sinned away our God, lost our defence, and lessened our privileges and our happiness.

The awful business of *this day*, evinces our dreadful situation. We are in a state of *War*, and under the chastising rod of offended Deity, for some *provoking crime* committed against Heaven's pure Majesty; a punishment often threatened against Israel for transgression*: "From whence
" come wars and fightings among you; come they
" not of your lusts†?"

War is always unjust on one side: it may be so in both parties: yet it may be, and is sometimes just and absolutely necessary: as

First: when it is purely defensive, unprovoked and oppressive.

Secondly: When it is to recover a property which was unjustly captured. So Abraham's, to rescue Lot. "And Melchisedeck, the Priest of
" the most high God, blessed Abraham in the name
" of his God‡."

Thirdly: When it is carried on with a view to Peace, and as the last argument for obtaining it.
"When thou comest against a City then pro-
" claim peace unto it§.

* Deut. xxviii. 49. † James, iv. 1. ‡ Gen, xiv, 15—19.

§ Deut. xx, x.

It is not for me to make any remarks upon the conduct of Governments; in this respect, I shall only lay it down as one of the indispensable laws of national Justice, to *offer terms of peace* to our Enemies, before we proceed to make war upon them. I shall therefore say no more upon this subject, but, secondly, proceed to take notice of a few of our national circumstances.

Cast then your contemplating eyes throughout Europe:—Extend them to the Asiatic plains:—glance at African shores, and view the American Isles: With what gigantic steps does this Monster advance for the destruction of the peace and happiness of the human race. War, horrid war! monstrous, All-devouring being, who spares nor enemy or friend, but will be fed by, will *gormandize* on both!—To admit her, is to throw open our gates to a merciless foe!—How has she ravaged Spain, Poland, Germany, France, Flanders, Holland, Italy, England, the Mediterranean Isles, East and West Indies, &c. How wide the prospect! The carnage how dreadful! Instead of cultivated fields, presenting the rich bounties of Providence to his Creatures, we behold the leafless desert, and ghastly famine stalking in the regions of plenty! Instead of domestic joys we view the widow's agonies, and hear her doleful cries!

Hark!

Hark ! the orphans demanding the return of their fires, when, alas! they are either numbered with the dead, or are tossing on beds of misery and woe! View the patriarch, covered with the silver locks of age, leaning upon his staff, and in torture surveying the destruction of his country! I see him taking his last view, and with horror descending to the tomb! Why weeps the unweaned infant! behold its mother stretched a stiff and lifeless corpse, while it in vain attempts to draw life and nourishment from the fountain of its own existence! But the reflections are too painful for me to continue. O! may the God of all mercies kindly preserve Britain from these miseries,

From these, reflect what in all probability will in the course of the ensuing summer take place on the great and wide sea.

Reflect also upon the enemy we have to fight with: one who has given proofs of the sagacity of his councils: of his watchfulness and of his operations, both by land and sea. Reflect on their courage, their victories, and vast property; their fourteen armies of well disciplined veterans; amounting in the whole to about one million two hundred thousand. Reflect also upon their mighty fleets, with their late additions, and these at our own

door. 'Tis true they have stained all by deism, treachery and cruelty; yet these shew they are a people not to be trifled with, nor scorned; perhaps only to be conquered by mighty prayer, the great work of this solemn day.

Reflect again, upon our own situation. Weakened as we are by the loss of America, by the defection of our Allies, the declining of our trade, and the decrease of our population, we are the less able to combat with an enemy of such strength. Reflect also, upon the awful visitation of providence in the seasons. Was it not these gave Holland to the French? Behold the dreadful depredations of the floods at home! Hear the alarming reports of scarcity of grain, and these proceeding from the best authorities. What numbers of consuming fires, both in the metropolis and the principal towns of the kingdom! What havock has fell disease made this year! how are the bills of mortality swelled beyond any former period, except when pestilence invaded the land! Hark! the groans of the complaining poor! Does not every man's ear tingle with the doleful knell; and is not every thinking person expecting still greater calamities, being alarmed both for personal and national safety? Upon the whole earth denies comfort

fort, and the only asylum appears to be the Lord God of hosts.

Once more, to excite to the proper work of this day, and of days to come, while this war lasts, reflect also that besides what is gone, there is yet more in danger; and this is the more afflicting when we remember the prosperity we enjoyed a few years ago. From the enjoyment of the all-cheering blessing of peace, we are now plunged into the miseries of war; a war which seems to threaten the whole habitable globe with commotion and woe.

Since things are so, and danger at our doors; disasters upon disasters pouring upon us, our enemies encreasing in strength and power; every day crowning them with fresh victories, and new allies; while our condition is the direct reverse: let us to excite our piety and humility, seriously enquire—Is not the Lord departed from us*? Is not our defence gone†? Is it not plain that he even fights against us: our sins have justly provoked him to anger, and he will punish for iniquity.

That the sins of Britain, as a nation, have arrived to an enormous height is what every serious person must acknowledge; and that national punish-

* Hosea, ix. 12.

† Numb. xiv. 9.

ments are the certain consequences is undeniable.—

“Is this conjecture of advent’rous thought?

“Or pious coward’s pulpit cushion’d dream?

“Far from it! this is certain; this is fate.”

YOUNG.

Let us enquire what these reigning sins are.

First then: Unthankfulness and forgetfulness of past mercies and deliverances.

Secondly: Indifference about the true *evangelical protestant religion*, with a fostering of popery; never had she more probability of gaining her supremacy than at this time; her other attempts were too rapid: this is regular.

Thirdly: A general neglect of serious godliness in the higher ranks, and consequent immorality in the inferior orders of the people.

Fourthly: A general neglect of the solemn warnings, and divine chastisements, which at present threaten us.

Fifthly: Divisions among the professors of religion of every denomination, whereby the religion of Jesus receives wounds in the house of her friends.

Sixthly: The general spread of *pride*, luxury, and malice, masked under apparent zeal for the church.

Seventhly: Self elation or despising of others: that acknowledged sin of this nation.

Let us now attend to those of a private and personal nature.—These are,

First: An almost universal breach of the sabbath, and neglect of social duties.

Secondly: Sportive slander of the innocent, where the culprit can escape the lash of law.

Thirdly: Unjust prejudices against the quiet in the land, which lead to outrageous violence, not short of persecution.

Fourthly: Enflaming accusations of the innocent, in pulpit harangues, clubs, &c. whereby, in the former case, the sacredness of God's worship is destroyed, and in the latter the peace of society.

Fifthly: Lying and profane swearing, with that yet *more awful* crime PERJURY, so common in this day.

Sixthly: Defrauds both of government and individuals, in their just and acknowledged rights.

But, fellow christians, distressing as things appear, (and I think I have not swelled them beyond what they really are,) we have yet many blessings in reserve; nor is our situation so desperate, as to oblige us to throw ourselves into the hands of our enemies for mercy. However I lament the rise of
the

the war, and the calamities it has brought upon us still I would not exchange for foreign masters; and I confidently hope, there is not one among us who wishes to overthrow our present legally constituted government, for strange landlords, French exactors, or Roman tax-gatherers. And if ever it pleases the divine providence to permit an invasion upon our island, I hope he will raise a proper spirit in the armies of our British Israel, to repel the invading foe.

Contemplate upon the *mercies* you yet enjoy:—Your Sovereign chosen by your free suffrage, at the revolution in the year 1688, by which, the act of toleration and bill of rights, your religion and liberties have been secured: and although in some respects these have not confirmed to you *all* your natural and civil rights, yet remember, the blessings they convey, in delivering you from the horrors of popery and ecclesiastical tyranny. Whatever difficulties you may yet labour under, bear with patience, until God shall put it into the hearts of your governors to do you justice; nor ever let any other means than those which are strictly legal, be used by you to recover your rights.

Contemplate also, that you each enjoy your own habitation in safety; and although lawless
 mobs

mobbs may destroy your property, and abuse your persons, yet the laws of your country restore the one, and protect the other.

Consider also, that such has been the case with christians in every age: it was so with our Lord, and surely the servant is not above his master. But remember in this he has pronounced you blessed. It is easy to conclude who is right, the persecutor or the persecuted. Consider likewise, that you enjoy the sweet society of your friends and relations, and as yet you have sufficient employ to store your board with the necessaries of life, and those domestic comforts which sweeten your passage through this pilgrimage.

Consider above all, that you have the house of God and his worship, for your sabbath repast: here you may worship your Heavenly Father in spirit and in truth, according to his own regulations in the sacred scriptures. You have yet your Bible, the pure gospel and sacraments, all which convey to you light, life, and knowledge.

Consider also, that you have your ministers appointed according to the rule of your God, and the usages of the *primitive christians*: that there are none to make you afraid in the use of them at present, whatever you may fear of forfeiting them hereafter.

But

But likewise consider, that however great your mercies are, sin may put between your God and you. How awful would the change then be! How distressing should he remove your candlestick out of its place, and curse the blessings you yet enjoy! This has been the case in former times, and was a just punishment for sin, lukewarmness, and profaneness. Then were your bibles burnt; your ministers and saints martyred; your houses and fields laid waste; and yourselves flying to the wilds, for shelter from the persecuting foe.

Yes, consider that sin saps the foundation of every blessing: none exempt from punishment, for the commission thereof: the highest sublunary stations and enjoyments, equally as the most base and sordid. Need I refer you to the King of the French? the King of Poland? the Stadtholder of Holland? Every age has given sufficient proofs of the truth of this assertion.

Consider, lastly, that God has often removed his gospel for the sins of its professors. Where now are the once flourishing churches of Asia: of Africa: of Bohemia: of France: of Spain, &c? and how justly might he do to us, as he has done to Shiloh*! But, I hope, there are greater mercies in store for us.

* Jer. vii. 12.

Thirdly:

Thirdly: I now proceed to state the duties of the day.

One of the great difficulties of ministers, lies, I think, in rightly stating and placing Christian Duties, either common, or such extraordinary, as are appropriated to suit this day. The practising of duties in itself, I do not consider as available to the *removal* of punishments, or *atoning* for the sins which bring them on: both these invaluable blessings I attribute solely to the free favour of God, through the rich merit of the atoning Saviour: duty, both in flying from evil, and practising every good work, I deem the way of obtaining mercy: in obedience to the divine command, under the influence of the promised spirit of grace and supplication. And though we may not be capable of * identifying the sin, for which a particular judgment is inflicted, yet those particular actions and omissions which scripture styles *sinful*, and the punishment heaven affixes to them. We may *mark out*: we are bound to call the people to reform, how disagreeable soever to some; but I hope ye have not so learned Christ as to reject the suitable word of exhortation.

What more in point than to say—Return, O

* II Sam. xxi. 1, 2.

Lord

Lord! to the many thousands of Britain, and cause Britain to return unto thee. Britain has need of both, and has encouragement and promise for both. If she returns to the Lord with her whole heart—If she puts away her idols, and prepares a heart to serve the Lord*, she shall be saved from every enemy†.

Fervent Prayer and fasting is a good way of returning.—

First; It is God's appointed way, and it is ours this day. It is the way which Moses took, in the use of the name Israel: a name dear to God: a name of his own giving and calling: a name obtained by, and in prayer‡.

Britain is his also: and by what he has done for her appears to be equally precious to him. It would exceed my time and abilities, to recount all the favours he has bestowed upon Britain, to prove her his.

Secondly: In pleading the *numbers* of his people, the thousands of Israel. Israel was then about two millions. England contains now about eight millions; and with Scotland and Ireland at least twelve millions. These are many thousands indeed.

Now if the Lord made it an argument with Jonah concerning Nineveh, "That it was a great

* 1 Sam. vii. 3. † 11 Chron. xx. passim. ‡ Gen. xxxii. 28.

"city,

“city, containing more than six score thousand
 “persons, that could not discern between the right
 “hand and the left hand*.” These being sup-
 posed Infants forming about an eighth part of the
 city, which would then amount to nearly one mil-
 lion; we may surely borrow an argument for
 prayer for Britain therefrom.

Thirdly: Suppose England to contain ten thou-
 sand parishes, and only ten righteous persons in
 each parish: it gives one hundred thousand praying
 souls in this pious requisition; or if only five it
 gives fifty thousand, with their ministers between
 the porch and the altar, crying out, Return, O
 Lord, to the many thousands of Israel †.

How glorious an army with banners! What
 may we not expect from the united prayers of so
 many saints; for he hath said “If two of you
 “agree on earth, as touching any thing that they
 “shall ask, it shall be done for them; ‡” and all
 under the lead and influence of the great apostle
 and high priest of our profession: our advocate
 with the father: Jesus Christ the righteous§.
 Would not then, God; the God of Israel, the
 God of Britain hear? We can hardly suppose a

* Jonah, iv. 11

† Gen. xviii. 32.

‡ Matt. xviii. 19.

§ Heb. iii. 1.—1 John, ii. 1.

more welcome invitation offerable to him.—
Would he not return, return as the dove with the
olive leaf of PEACE*? Peace as an uninterrupted
and perpetual river; whose streams are broad and
numerous as the waves of the sea: washing away
our sins and reproach: covering our shores with
enriching blessings and holy comforts: and filling
our houses and hearts † with every good.

Let us then petition the throne of Almighty
God: That he would be pleased graciously to re-
turn to the people of Britain, in prayer, this day.

That he would return to his ministers in answer
of prayer.

That he would return to the King of Great-Bri-
tain and defend him from every enemy.

To the grand council of the nation.

To the Parliaments at this time assembled.

To the armies and navies of Britain, to give
courage and conduct, and cover their heads in the
day of battle.

To the churches of Britain, to bless the *word*
preached for conviction and reformation, repen-
tance and pardon.

That he would return for restoring and preserving
British liberties and privileges, civil and religious.

* Gen. viii. 6.

† Isaiah, xlviii. 11.

That

That he would be pleased to spare the shedding of human blood; and incline the hearts of the angry nations to peace and brotherly love.

That he would be pleased to save the nations from deism, popery, and slavery, and crown them all with eternal salvation.

Another duty I would recommend to you, is a diligent search how much we or any of us are culpable in these respects.—Let each ask, Lord is it I? Am I the cause that thou thus contendest* with us, with Britain? Discover our guilt and take away our punishment.

I wish you also seriously to confess the same when discovered: it is one mark of true repentance, to confess our sins.

Again, resolve by grace to forsake those crimes, which have brought these punishments upon us, if peradventure the Lord may return and leave a blessing behind.

Again, sympathize with all your fellow sufferers, both national and personal; and in this, shew that you have bowels of compassion as christians.

Reasons for confessing and forsaking the evils above mentioned, are many and at hand, as, these evils have often occasioned the ruin of many and

* Job. x. 2.

great nations, and are conspicuous in the present day. We may forfeit our indulgencies and thus ruin our posterity: these we cannot justify now, nor reflect on comfortably at death. How then shall we answer for them to our just and final judge!

Before I close, give me leave to appeal to your impartial judgment and ask your decision. Are we this day national or personal the proper objects of heavier chastisements, or the prepared monuments of free and undeserved mercy. Are we not manifestly poised! weighing in the balances*? How ponderous our sins! How wanting in the genuine graces of humble sorrow, of repentance and return! Let each retire within himself and give the answer.

Let me also entreat you not to be careless in these scenes, as *others* who lay them not to heart, or vainly boast of victory before combat. Do not despise the Lord's chastening, neither faint under his hand.

Again: Think not that our devotion this day, will clear the past account, or recover what we have sinned away; or that it will turn the counsels or arms of the enemy. No: without reformation, our policy,

* Dan. v. 27.

our courage or resources, however great, will not suffice. Except the Lord return to the many thousands of Britain, we must expect still greater calamities.

Set it down as a certain truth, that if the same sins be continued in, or new ones, *if possible* be added to those already committed: if prayer and true principles of piety be abandoned, or despised: if the Lord Christ be still rejected, and denied to reign in righteousness among us, be assured that his anger will still burn against us: and who shall dare to say to him, What dost thou*.

Lastly: Regard the signs of the times, and prepare to meet him at his second coming: be watchful, for he will come as a thief in the night, and his reward is with him to give to every one according to his works.

The Lord spare and have mercy on a sinful nation, laden with iniquity†; and may he thus soon return to the thousands of Britain.

* Isaiah, i. 4.

† Job, ix. 12.

FINIS.

HYMN.

WHILE Joshua led the armed bands
Of Israel forth to war;
Moses apart, with lifted hands
Engag'd in humble prayer.

The armed bands had quickly fail'd,
And perish'd in the fight;
If Moses' prayer had not prevail'd
To put the foes to flight.

When Moses' hands thro' weakness dropp'd,
The warriors fainted too;
Israel's success at once was stopp'd,
And Am'leck bolder grew.

A people always prone to boast,
Were taught by this suspense,
That not a numerous armed host,
But God was their defence.

We now of fleets and armies vaunt,
And ships and men prepare;
But men like Moses most we want,
To save the state by prayer.

Yet, LORD, we hope thou hast prepar'd
A hidden few to day;
(The nations sacred strength and guard)
To weep, and mourn, and pray.

O hear their prayers, and grant us aid,
Bid war and discord cease;
Heal the sad breach which sin has made,
And bless us all with *PEACE*.

OMICRON.

